

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

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**WINNER:** **Mishcon de Reya**

"In April 2020 the Mishcon Academy (alongside Business Development and Digital Marketing) launched an external hub branded the Mishcon Academy Digital Sessions (MADS), a series of online events, videos and podcasts looking at key issues faced by our clients. Utilising Zoom technology we created a broad syllabus of relevant events which included brother of Stephen Lawrence, Stuart Lawrence discussing Black Lives Matter and comedian David Baddiel discussing his Holocaust denial BBC documentary.

In September 2020, alongside the MADS we launched our first online external prospectus for the autumn term on a new web portal with learning filters. This built on and incorporated MADS events such as Piers Morgan discussing his new book Wake Up and Alastair Campbell discussing his mental health issues and Monica Lewinsky discussing online bullying.

From autumn and into spring we also undertook more direct external engagement through the In-House portal, for in-house legal teams, the Sports Law Academy and Junior Lawyer Programme. The latter two effectively engaged with both junior clients and potential new joiners.

The Excellence in Learning and Development award from People in Law, against such respected nominees (Dentons and DAC Beachcroft) was recognition for all the hard work undertaken by the team. We enjoyed the ceremony and were surprised and happy to win in this category. We hope that we can build on this and expand further our external offering. We would also welcome anyone interested to sign up to future Academy events."

# PEOPLE AWARDS IN LAW \ 2021

## BEST HEALTH & WELLBEING INITIATIVE (FOR FIRMS OF UP TO 750 EMPLOYEES INCLUDING PARTNERS)

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**WINNER:**

Kingsley  
Napley

“The wellbeing of our people has always been important to us at Kingsley Napley, but over the past 18 months we have prioritised our mental and physical wellbeing offering, to further support our employees and partners through the pandemic by launching a COVID-19 wellbeing programme. This programme offered virtual exercise classes, a meditation programme, counselling sessions, webinars on resilience, managing your mental health, eating well, and working from home, as well as extending our ‘Summer in the City’ 4pm finish on the last Friday of the month to the whole year, so that firm members could take some time for themselves away from their screens.

We also extended our ‘wellness subsidy’ to allow firm members to spend their £200 wellbeing allowance on their families, ran a number of week-long campaigns (such as a step-challenge and mental health awareness week) and provided additional support to parents and carers. We are thrilled to be recognised for our efforts in this area, particularly after such a difficult year, with special thanks to our HR Team, the Wellbeing Group and our Management Team, without whom this programme would not have been possible.”

# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST HEALTH & WELLBEING INITIATIVE (FOR FIRMS OF OVER 750 EMPLOYEES INCLUDING PARTNERS)

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**WINNER:**

**MILLS & REEVE**  
Achieve more. Together.

“Mills & Reeve is honoured to have been named as winner of this award. We aim to create an environment where people thrive and focus on a holistic approach to wellbeing, looking at the whole person and their physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing.

Wellbeing, diversity & inclusion manager, Natasha Broomfield-Reid has worked tirelessly over the challenging last year to support all staff by rolling out a variety of wellbeing initiatives to cover the broad range of wellbeing needs across the firm and for each individual. The initiatives have addressed health, fitness, digital and financial wellbeing to contribute towards the firm’s positive culture and work-life balance focus. Mills & Reeve always has its people at the heart of everything we do and our people-focused approach is what makes our wellbeing initiatives exceptional, generating a fantastic working culture and positively impacting on productivity, loyalty, retention and more. Thank you to People in Law for the award.”

# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST CSR INITIATIVE

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**WINNER:**

MACFARLANES

"The Refugee Law Clinic (RLC) is a joint initiative between University of London, Macfarlanes and Clifford Chance. The RLC provides legal pro bono advice for asylum applicants, with a focus on preparing fresh claims of asylum (an area identified as underserved in the current legal landscape). Submitting a fresh claim for asylum is the process by which a refused asylum applicant makes further representations based on important new factors such as changed circumstances or additional evidence. In the first year of the clinic volunteer lawyers from Macfarlanes spent 852 hours volunteering at the RLC.

The individuals involved are absolutely delighted that the RLC won Best CSR Initiative. The RLC is an innovative project that involves a lot of planning and collaboration across several parties. The impact of the pandemic and subsequent revisions to delivery meant that the RLC has had to adapt swiftly to changing circumstances. We are so pleased with the support that this service has been able to provide to clients and that the positive impact has been recognised by the judges in the clinic's early stages."

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST SOCIAL MOBILITY & APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVES AND GRAND PRIX

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**WINNER:**

**ashurst**

"Winning the award for Best Social Mobility Initiative and overall best HR initiative is a great accolade and a fitting testament to the team's dedication and absolute focus on addressing barriers to access and creating an environment in which people from all backgrounds can succeed. Ashurst's approach to recruitment is comprehensive and inclusive, and we are incredibly proud of the work that our Early Careers and Social Impact teams have undertaken to ensure our recruitment processes are open and accessible to all, with the ultimate aim of providing a direct pathway into Ashurst and a profession in law."

*Alison Hardy, Dispute Resolution Partner & Head of the Social Mobility Network*

"We are delighted that People in Law has recognised our efforts to address barriers to access to law and supporting early careers talent. It is wonderful recognition of Ashurst's strong culture of supporting social mobility across the UK and our legal apprenticeships are one of the many ways we can create a more diverse workforce and ensure that talented young people have the opportunity to succeed within the firm."

*Nick Wong, Global Loans Partner & Early Careers Partner*

# PEOPLE AWARDS IN LAW \ 2021

## EXCELLENCE IN EQUALITY & INCLUSION

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**WINNER:**



“The deaths of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd sparked a global focus on the #BlackLivesMatter campaign. This either directly or indirectly affected our people and highlighted that more needed to be done to address the representation and inclusion of black and other ethnic talent throughout our firm. We recognised the importance of listening to our people and understanding their views and perspectives before we rushed to implement anything. We did this by hosting a series of Let’s talk about race firmwide webinars, which offered our people an opportunity to share their thoughts, frustrations and ideas for positive change.

The first session focused on our people’s reactions to the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests. This was followed by an opportunity to share any personal experiences or feedback to the firm. This gave everyone a voice and allowed their thoughts to be heard. As a result of this we wanted to make clear commitments to drive ethnicity inclusion, so we signed up to the Rare Race Fairness Commitment and BITC Race at Work Charter, and created a 23-step Race Equality Action plan to help us improve inclusion of under-represented ethnic, and particularly black, talent at Gowling WLG.

Being recognised for this work means a lot to us because it shows the importance of listening to our people, hearing the impact on them of organisational and society-wide issues and taking action to address the lack of racial diversity and inclusion.”

# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST HR INNOVATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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**WINNER:**

MACFARLANES

“With the support of our lawtech team we built a bespoke system to be used on our virtual vacation schemes. The system was designed and built entirely in-house from beginning to end and therefore exclusive to Macfarlanes.

Once it became apparent that Covid-19 lockdown restrictions meant we would be unable to run our vacation schemes in person we quickly began work on turning our schemes virtual. In a matter of months we ideated, built, launched and trained on the firm’s own virtual vacation scheme platform, a multifaceted solution bringing together remote training and collaboration in a single online environment. The project was delivered within two months of instruction and on budget.

At the end of each scheme we asked each of the 62 participants to complete an anonymous feedback form. One of the questions that we asked was “how would you rate the online HighQ Collaborate vacation scheme site?”. All 62 participants rated the site the top score of Exceptional.

The teams involved worked tirelessly on the project and to be recognised for our efforts by the judges was a huge honour and meant an awful lot to everyone involved. We thoroughly enjoyed the ceremony and look forward to the 2022 awards.”

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST TRAINEE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

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**WINNER:** 大成 DENTONS

"We are delighted to win Best Trainee Recruitment Campaign for our 'Challengers. Accepted.' campaign. The project's ambition was to highlight our unique position as the world's largest law firm, our standout practice area reputations, our 'Challenger' brand and our vision of being the law firm of the future, now. To do this, we adopted an innovative approach to marketing early careers, breaking away from the norm to ensure the campaign resonated with 'Challengers' who wanted to join us in challenging the status quo. It successfully communicates our inclusive culture that strives for equity and embraces, respects and values exceptional talent from diverse backgrounds. The 'Challengers. Accepted.' message was carried through the whole candidate journey from application process, onboarding to their development journey. Each stage designed to appeal to 'Challengers' who wish to shape and define the future of law.

The response to the campaign has been incredibly positive and the energy of the campaign endures with more activity planned for 2021 – 22. It is fantastic to see all the hard work and dedication of the team recognised."



# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## M O S T I N N O V A T I V E H R I N I T I A T I V E

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**WINNER:**

**dacb**  
DAC BEACHCROFT

“DACB’s Reconnect programme, which was launched in October 2020, is designed to provide people who have had a career break to have a family, take on care responsibilities or pursue other interests, support as they return to the legal profession. It was driven by our belief that there was a group of untapped lawyers, a pool of talent who could bring unique skills from time away from the law, to whom we wanted to provide an opportunity to whilst also enabling us to plug talent gaps. The programme provides access to training, mentoring, and flexible and agile working arrangements. Successful applicants are able to join the firm on an initial six-month, fixed-term contract (FTC) with the support of a return-to-work coaching plan, giving them time to get to know the role and gain experience in their new position, with an opportunity for roles to become permanent.

We’re delighted that the programme has been recognised by People in Law; it’s a project we’re proud of and believe will make a positive impact to the diversity and performance of our teams.”

*Sue Jenkins, Talent Partner*

# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

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**WINNER:**

Kingsley  
Napley

"23rd March 2020 was the last time that the majority of KN firm members attended the office, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a time of unprecedented uncertainty, it was of the utmost importance that our firm response was proactive and supportive to all, ensuring that we could work from home safely and effectively, whilst maintaining the high levels of engagement and our culture and values.

In order to achieve this our Managing Partner, Linda Woolley, sent a daily email from March to June 2020 (which moved to weekly from July to date) to keep the firm updated, lift spirits and boost morale during the most difficult of times. Linda's emails were at times, focused on topics such as support for parents and carers, mental health and wellbeing, and we launched a training programme to support firm members with the radical change to their daily lives. We also sent everyone desk and IT equipment, created an internal portal of support for the latest government news/advice and internal support resources. As a firm, we thought it was important to be 'together' as much as possible, and threw a number of virtual firmwide social events, including our AGM where we launched the 'inaugural KN awards' to recognise individual contributions during a difficult year.

Recognition from People in Law is a huge achievement, and coupled with the feedback from the firm being overwhelmingly positive in this area, this award really means the world to us."

# PEOPLE IN LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION

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**WINNER: ELISA LEWIS**



"To be shortlisted was an honour, but to win is nothing short of a privilege.

It goes without saying that the past year has been a challenge for all businesses, employees, families and individuals alike. My role at Mills Selig focuses on our wonderful team and the smooth operation of the firm's case management system. Moving our entire operation to a successful work from home set-up overnight presented many challenges, but equally it very soon highlighted the opportunities and the strong connectivity of our entire team. We started communicating in new ways and we all shared a great appreciation for those daily phone calls, even if it was just a quick call to check in and say hello.

Fast forward one year and we have adapted to a new balance of working both from home and from the office, a positive change for our employees and their families. I am thankful that my role played a part in making this all possible for our team, and I am delightfully honoured and appreciative that my colleagues took the time to enter me into this award.

Thank you to all the judges and congratulations to my co-winner, Sue Brooks from Trowers & Hamlins, who was equally deserving of this award. Let's raise a glass."

*Elisa Lewis, Office Manager*

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## BEST INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION

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**WINNER: SUE BROOKS**



"It's fair to say that everyone was thrilled at Sue's win. Sue is a legend at the firm, being known as someone who truly cares about the people here and works very hard, often outside normal working hours to ensure everyone's wellbeing. She has been described as an 'angel'. Sue has had an exceptional career and it was fitting for the industry to recognise her contribution in the year before she retires. The work of the Rewards team is sometimes taken for granted – Sue's win has put it centre stage at Trowers. We are all very proud of Sue."

*Paul Robinson, Director of Human Resources*

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## RISING STAR

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**WINNER: SOPHIA COX**



"Working as an apprentice within HR at Gowling WLG has taught me invaluable skills, instilled great confidence and presented me with the opportunity to find my passion for working within Early Talent. I was recognised for the work I have done in developing the firm's first virtual vacation scheme and putting together a very successful early talent marketing campaign, both in terms of increasing applications and attracting a diverse range of candidates. Having only started in the Early Talent team in February 2020, it has been great to be able to make valuable contributions to what the team does and to have been recognised for it. I am absolutely delighted to have won this award and hope to demonstrate the power of apprenticeships and how they provide a pathway to a successful career."

*Sophia Cox, HR Apprentice*

# PEOPLE AWARDS IN LAW \ 2021

## SENIOR HR ALLY

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**WINNER: FIONA MCBRIDE**



"We nominated Fiona McBride for this award in order to acknowledge her invaluable contribution to our HR team's objectives, particularly in relation to diversity and inclusion (D&I). The impact of Fiona's passion, influence and partnership-level backing has been game changing, resulting in real cultural change within our firm in embracing the importance of inclusion.

Fiona is extremely proud and humbled to have won this award, especially in light of such an impressive shortlist. Winning has publicly validated her work in this space and given a boost to her ambitions to maintain and further her drive to create a welcoming and inclusive culture in the firm and more broadly in our sector."

*Terri Pettifer-Eagles, Head of HR & Administration*

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## HR TEAM OF THE YEAR (FOR FIRMS OF UP TO 750 EMPLOYEES INCLUDING PARTNERS)

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**WINNER:**



PENNINGTONS  
MANCHES  
COOPER

"We're so pleased to be recognised for this award. This year, our HR team has taken on a very ambitious breadth of projects, which have proven a clear and tangible impact in the key strategic areas of the firm. From moving to an HR Business Partner structure, implementing new HR systems, adopting a future-proof agile working strategy, to reviewing our processes in line with our Diversity & Inclusion strategy, we are very proud of what we achieved as a team!"

"An amazing win for the team I am proud to be part of. It really cements all the hard work put in over the past year (and more). It is fantastic to have our work externally recognised in this way and a morale boost for both the team and the wider firm. We were just sad not to be able to celebrate in person but the time will come."

*Karen Munford, Senior Reward & Benefits Manager*

"We are delighted to be commended for our work over the past year. The department has spearheaded a variety of projects that have resulted in benefits across the firm and have helped to make everyone's working day easier. It is also a credit to our team that they managed to achieve so much during what has been a particularly challenging time."

*Andrea Law, HR Director*

# PEOPLE LAW \ AWARDS 2021

## HR TEAM OF THE YEAR (FOR FIRMS OF OVER 750 EMPLOYEES INCLUDING PARTNERS)

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**WINNER:**



“We were delighted to win this award which recognises the hard work and efforts of the HR team in a uniquely challenging year. It’s also great recognition for the firm as a whole. Towers identified a ‘People First’ strategy at the outset of lockdown to protect jobs, so we were in a great position to push on as the firm recovered from the initial impacts of the pandemic. The firm has emphasised the wellbeing of its staff throughout and the HR team has led the way on this. It was pleasing as well that our D&I initiatives were also commended at the awards. There is a great spirit within the HR team and they have responded enthusiastically and with great tenacity to the challenges this year.

It’s been a real boost to all in HR to have external recognition of their work and everyone is delighted. I am proud to lead this team of great people.”

*Paul Robinson, Director of Human Resources*